



# Cotswold Sheep Society Newsletter

Registered Charity No. 1013326

15 Barnsley, Cirencester, Glos, GL7 5EF

*Please note as from 23rd January 2008*

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## Council Officers

Chairman – Mr Bob Palmer

Vice Chairman – Mrs Yvonne Froehlich

Secretary – Mrs Lucinda Foster

Treasurer, Registrar – Mrs Lynne Parkes

## Council Members

Mrs Judy Wilkie, Mrs Margaret Pursch, Mrs Kate Kay,  
Mr Robin Leach, Mr Derek Cross, Mr Richard Mumford, Mr Thomas Jackson

**Editors:** Norman Kay and Sandra Rath



*Yvonne Froehlich winning the Crook for the Best Home Bred Sheep at the Winter Social*

January 2008 edition

## NEW YEAR MESSAGE FROM SOCIETY PRESIDENT

There is no doubt that owners of Cotswold sheep are passionate about their Breed and the Society.

Our very successful Social evening on Saturday November 24<sup>th</sup> at Aldsworth Village Hall seemed to mark the dawn of a new era.

It was a delight to welcome our new Secretary, Lucinda Foster and her husband. Lucinda was like Cinderella's slipper and one would have thought she had been with us for ever. I know we will find her friendly, easy going personality a great asset and she has already shown signs of being super efficient and hardworking with smiles!

As a rather ancient member tending to be pessimistic about all the problems facing livestock farming, I was very pleasantly surprised to find that we have young people in our midst taking a much more optimistic view of the future. Good news indeed. It was also a great pleasure to see so many new (to me) faces, and I hope that it will mean more people becoming closely involved with the Society. A healthy thriving Society is the only way to keep the Breed progressing.

On thanking the Society for her appointment as Life President, Joan Colburn told us of the very early days when Cotswold sheep were rescued from oblivion. It served as a reminder that we have a responsibly to keep up the good work. It could so easily slip backwards, though at the moment this seems unlikely.

My very best wishes go to everyone for the year 2008.

Pat Quinn

## COUNCIL CORNER

*The Society has decided to print in the newsletter a brief outline of what the Council is discussing at its meetings. Currently this includes:*

**Council** heard about the great success of the society show that was held in July at the Cotswold Show in Cirencester. They agreed to repeat this in 2008. To ensure all members wishing to attend or just visit can do so, complementary passes will be made available.

**Society's website.** Mr. D. Ivens has asked if he can give up its administration. Mr. P. Froehlich has offered to take this over.

**It was heard** that male registration figures were becoming disproportionately high. Council agreed, subject to checking with the Charity Commission, to raise the registration fees for rams to £25.

**After the Breeds of Gloucester Sale** was cancelled due to foot and mouth the auctioneers agreed to waive their fees. Council nevertheless decided to pay them the entry fees plus £200 as a good will gesture. They wish the sale to continue next year.

# OUR FLOCKS

*Nick Cater has sent us in this heartwarming story about his Kington flock .*

## **The Kington Flock**

In October 1988 I was appointed to the staff of the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust as a tourist guide, on the understanding that in the following spring I would be responsible for establishing and developing the farm at Mary Arden's House in Wilmcote near Stratford upon Avon. I know that all this must seem quite irrelevant but keep on reading!

The first project to be implemented was the foundation of a flock of sheep and it seemed appropriate that these should be Cotswolds. At this point you must understand that I knew nothing about sheep (not much has changed there then, I hear you say!), so with the expert help and guidance of Robert Boodle, five ewes and their lambs arrived from Alan Lyons and Jo Atwool. Over the years, rams came from Middlewick, Stowell, Bemborough and Harford, but the star performer both at shows and as a breeding ewe was OAKHILL CARNATION 5<sup>th</sup> - eventually sold after a few years to Shaun and Lyn Gibbings.

Sadly all good things come to an end. The retirement policy at the Shakespeare Trust meant that in 2002 I had to give up the farm, but as the saying goes, "When one door closes another one opens.

I decided to start my own flock, so with the purchase of four ewe lambs from the Trust the Kington flock came into existence. We only have a one and a half acre paddock with a home built barn here in Claverdon, but neighbouring paddocks and orchards became available, and it was possible for the flock to expand. Then ill health intervened. Unfortunately during 2003 I was diagnosed with renal failure which meant an urgent re-think of the flock. I was able to sell most of the sheep but I desperately wanted to keep a few special animals. Norman and Kate Kay stepped into the breach and kindly looked after them for me at their home in Nailsworth, and due to their generosity the flock has been able to continue. In the following spring, after a successful kidney transplant, life gradually returned to normal and I now have a flock of eighteen sheep of various ages.

My interest in Oakhill breeding, and in particular the Carnation family, has meant concentrating on this strain with, we hope, judicious use of line breeding. Two super rams from Debbie McKellar's Drointon flock have been used and this season we have been fortunate enough to use OAKHILL VICTORY on some of the ewes. I believe he is the last living Oakhill ram - so will this line breeding be successful? Watch this space!

Nick Cater

## OFFICE SECTION

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May I take this opportunity of thanking everyone for giving me such a warm welcome to the Society. Everyone has been extremely friendly and James and I thoroughly enjoyed our first Winter Social event. It was a great chance to start putting some names to faces and I look forward to many more fun times ahead.

*Lucinda*

### Enclosed Forms

Enclosed with this newsletter are the annual forms for members to complete to register lambs and provide a census to count the number of breeding ewes there are in the national flock. The closing dates are on each form but as a reminder please let Lynne Parkes, Registrar, have the forms back by :

**Registration Form**  
**Census Form**

*30th September 2008 or long before is preferable*  
*30th April 2008*

### Council Elections 2008

A member of the Council, Mrs Judy Wilkie, is due to retire by rotation in 2008 and is eligible for re-election. The election of Chairman and Vice Chairman at last year's AGM moving them off Council into their posts and the resignation of Mr Ivens leaves a further three vacancies on Council. The co-options done after last years AGM of Mr Derek Cross, Mr Thomas Jackson & Mr Richard Mumford are one year positions.

Nominations are therefore invited to fill the four vacancies on Council at the 2008 AGM. The nominations must be received by the Secretary, by post, not later than 31<sup>st</sup> March 2008. A nomination form is enclosed with this newsletter which must be signed by nominee, proposer and seconder.

The Cotswold Sheep Society is a registered charity, the affairs of which are governed by trustees called Council Members. Nominees should bear in mind that, if elected, they will become trustees of the charity with the accompanying legal responsibilities.

Upon election it is hoped that a Council Member will be willing and able to give time to the Society, not only by attending Council meetings about 4 to 5 times a year but also by helping with events, working groups and all other activities that enable the Society to fulfil its objectives.

## SPRAY ON COAT LEAVES SHORN SHEEP HAPPY COME RAIN OR SHINE!

*We thought that you would like this amusing article by Barbara McMahon of The Guardian newspaper from last August. She has given her permission for us to reproduce it here.*

Imagine being left outside in freezing weather without any clothes on or standing naked for hours under a fierce sun. It's not much fun for newly sheared sheep in Australia, some of whom die of hypothermia or heat stress within days of having their fleeces removed.

Help may be at hand, however, after a chemist claimed yesterday to have developed a spray to protect delicate sheepskin from the harsh Australian elements.

Henry King said his biodegradable lanolin-based spray acts like an invisible raincoat on shorn sheep and can also be used as a sunscreen. Trials on livestock in New South Wales, a region badly hit this year with cold and wet weather, proved a success, he said. Certainly there will be a market: there are an estimated 120m sheep on the continent.

"It's a bit like a woman putting on hairspray to protect her 'do'," he told ABC Radio. "We set up a portable spray unit and it forms a fine mist and the sheep run through it." He said that wool growers in the Monaro region of NSW found that spraying sheep is less labour intensive than putting coats on the animals or keeping them in shelters for the critical two- to three-day period after shearing.

Australia's vast national flock is raised in conditions ranging from the hot and dry areas inland to the chilly highlands.

Mr King said those in the business had called the invention the "best thing since sliced bread for the industry".

## A COMMENTRY ON THE POTENTIAL FOR COTSWOLD SHEEP

*This is - "Thank God", you cry - the final instalment of a series of 3 articles intended to stimulate debate on the long-term future of Cotswold Sheep. The previous two parts attempted to explore the markets for products from Cotswold Sheep. Those markets being: meat, wool and breeding stock. Without a market there is no future only extinction. - Bob Palmer*

### **Part III – The Future**

The past has gone; it is history. We are entitled to celebrate it when appropriate. We can, and should, learn from it. But there nothing we can do to change it. However, the future is different. It is in our destiny. **Ours**', not someone else's. We are those currently responsible for what happens to the future of Cotswold Sheep.

Now our 40 year drive has brought us to a fork in the road. Where there are two direction markers on the sign-post. The first reads "Continue as you are - 20", an apparently pleasant narrow stony track with a small ditch running alongside. The second, points to a steep and perilous lane. Beyond which there appears to be a green and fertile river valley. This way reads; "Route to fame and fortune - 20". Alas we

have no map, guide or even knowledge of where or what either place is. Both are tempting options. But which one are we going to take?

This decision is exactly what we as a Society have to take now. Either:

1. Decide to “continue as we are” today. 1600 ewes, 100 flocks, solvent, friendly (most of the time) little group, quietly pottering along tending our sheep and preserving them for another day.

Or

2. Decide to take the “route to fame and fortune”. Potentially thousands of ewes, hundreds of flocks, many members, and international acclaim and long term security for the Cotswold breed.

**The choice is yours. YOU have to decide.**

Yet, don’t fool yourself into believing either is an easy option. Both will require much hard work. Neither one guarantees success. Even the “Continue as you are” option can result in failure if we become complacent or fail to evolve the way the Society is run.

As Chairman of Council, I will be sending each and every member of the Cotswold Sheep Society a joint referendum and questionnaire. In this you will be asked to make a choice on what future you want for the Society, and what help and assistance you are willing to provide to the Society. This will become the basis of our route plan for the next 20 years.

Each year that passes brings another which comes and goes quicker than the last. The pace of life has become relentless. It seems that you now have to run to stand still! The result being: people have less time for anything. We are I’m told, “A cash rich, time poor society”. Whilst I can wholeheartedly concur with the latter part of that statement I fail, sadly, to be able to agree to the first part. And therein lies our major problem. The Cotswold Sheep Society, like me, is not “cash rich”, but it is “time poor”. Our resources don’t extend to the point where we can employ an army of professionals to run the Society. We have to rely on the services of a small number of “time poor” individuals who increasingly struggle to find a little time to keep the Society running. Almost certainly there is a huge pool of knowledge, expertise and skills within the membership; and this is currently being wasted. In the past it was probably difficult to tap into that resource for specific purposes. Thankfully, the advent of Email and the Internet has changed that. All members can now, and **must** become involved with helping to run the society. This applies to either choice: “Continue as you are” or “Route to fame and fortune”. If the “Route to fame and fortune” is successful then the money would be available to employ those professionals. But until then it is down to YOU as a member to contribute some of that scarce commodity – “time”.

*“Everyone thought that somebody would do something. Unfortunately they didn’t, and nobody did anything. When everybody realised their mistake it was too late.” - Anon*

Over the next 3 months I would like to hear your ideas and opinions on the running of the Society and future of the Breed. Every member has something to contribute; so please contact me either by Email ([BuffaloUK@aol.com](mailto:BuffaloUK@aol.com)) or telephone.

Wishing you all a happy and prosperous 2008-2028!

Bob Palmer

## CONGRATULATIONS!

*We have wedding photographs of two society members who have 'tied the knot' in the last few weeks. We send our congratulations to them and wish them the very best for the future.*



**▲ Rob Harvey Long and his bride Luba**  
*With their wedding present - a Beswick  
Cotswold Sheep*



**Thomas Jackson and his bride Fiona**



## **BLACK COTSWOLDS - The Reactions**

*The articles in our October edition on the taboo subject of black Cotswold Sheep has prompted some reactions. In this issue we print two that we have received. The first is from Max and Christine Crossman who have experience of this in the USA. The second is from Libby Henson. Libby has studied animal genetics at postgraduate level and was previously Society Secretary. They both offer very interesting insights and views. "Please note that the Points Of Disqualification for the Breed Standard" are listed in the Flock Book.*

### **REACTION FROM USA**

Among Cotswold breeders no subject is more charged with emotion than that of black fibre in the fleece. In the U.S. it has resulted in a major rift among the breeders leading to a split which has reduced our numbers considerably.

Historically, the value of the Cotswold fleece was its durability, yield and above all its whiteness which allowed it to take dyes. I strongly feel that we as breeders of a heritage breed need to preserve those characteristics.

Recognizing what the goal is, I would not be perfectly honest if I denied that black spots appear on sheep with impeccable pedigrees. In our flock of about forty ewes we will have an occasional animal with a black spot of wool. When this happens we do not register the lamb, no matter how small the spot. We do not de-register the dam or sire since they may have produced many years of pure white offspring.

While in both the U. K. and U. S. the foundation flocks were well documented; the black fibres must come from either recessive gene expression or the introduction of outside genetics. This was either carefully researched and planned, as in the U.K. with the introduction of Leicester blood (which was the consensus among breeders as necessary to preserve the breed) or deceitfully to achieve some other desired characteristic such as overall size or length of loin. The only real motive of the latter would be to win in the show ring but clearly it is very detrimental to breed integrity.

There should be no blame or shame placed on a shepherd for a coloured lamb from good Cotswold blood lines. This situation should be out in the open so examples of proper husbandry and breed management can be exhibited. Genetic material combining in the embryonic lambs from centuries of breeding long before the registries were established can still affect lambs born today. Our responsibility is to continue to carefully and honestly select and cull to obtain the most correct Cotswolds according to the breed standards.

Evolution will not stop with our flock regardless of our best efforts to hold on to what we like. There is little control over the longevity of a great sire or the untimely death of a wonderful brood ewe. We are only stewards of a magnificent breed of sheep with a long tradition of greatness and historical impact on the human race. This tradition can not be bought or created it is a time tested honour bestowed on these animals.

In conclusion we must be extremely vigilant in our breeding practices and always remember that we are preserving history and genetic purity. It should never be compromised for any reason. The breed standard needs to be maintained and we will pass on to the next generation our beautiful Cotswold.



Show Lambs Getting Ready for the Eastern States Exposition



**The Crossman Family right to left** - Max, Victoria (ACRA lamb contest winner), Christine, Laurel (Max and Christine's daughter) and Gary (her husband) with their sheep at the Rhinebeck Sheep and Wool Festival October 2007

## **‘BLACK SHEEP IN THE FOLD’**

I read the recent Cotswold Sheep Society News letter with interest and some concern, and felt I should put pen to paper, or at least fingers to keyboard.

I think that there are two separate issues here. One is the appearance of black animals and the other the appearance of black spots.

**Black Spots** – The Cotswold is a white breed but the breed standards have always favoured black hooves and dark skin on the face, around the muzzle and eyes. These have good selective reasons, black hooves are stronger than white and dark exposed skin does seem to be less susceptible to infection. The selection has therefore always

been for pigmented parts of the body with predominantly white wool and hair. We have always seen individuals with spots of colour on the ears which was, to quote the breed standard 'not considered objectionable'. White hair on the face and legs has also occasionally given way to grey, slight speckling and small spots.

From a genetic point of view if you select for dark skin, there will be a continuum of the expression of dark spots in the hair and even into the fleece of some animals. Obviously one of the job of a livestock breeder is to control this drift and select those animals which are 'the best examples' of the breed. This is always done on balance. Some characteristics are a minimum requirement, for example good legs and mouths but others are on more of a sliding scale. Loose scurs on an exceptional ram might be tolerated, the same scur on a bad animal would be the final straw that sets its fate with butcher. I believe that small spots should be treated in the same way. A small spot of dark wool fibres on an outstanding ram might do less harm to the breed than dropped pasterns or an overshot jaw. We need to keep 'breeding for type' in perspective.

**Black Animals** – The appearance of black animals is, I believe a separate issue. There is black gene in most white sheep breeds although the Cotswold was traditionally thought to be 'very white' and there is little or no documented history of black individuals. However, there is no doubt that black is now present in the breed, and becoming more prevalent.

The Black gene, which creates black animals is recessive. This means that it is only expressed if the animal inherits the black gene from both parents. It is therefore possible to have the black gene in the population, at a very low frequency and go for many years without it ever being expressed. It is carried forward through the generations, hidden by the dominant white gene inherited from the other parent. It is only visible when, the black gene is carried by both parents and by chance, it is the black rather than the white version which is inherited from both of those parents.

The fact that a large number of breeders are now reporting the appearance of black lambs suggests that, within the past twenty years there have been some important rams who carried the hidden black gene. These rams had a big influence on the breed. They left a lot of sons and daughters who had many offspring in turn, resulting in the frequency of the hidden black gene increasing in the population. This increase in frequency means that the chance of two animals who carry the hidden black gene being mated together greatly increases. That in turn results in an inevitably increase in the number of black lambs being born.

### **What to do?**

We do have the tools to trace where the black gene came from, and the likely frequency within the population, if we want to do that. It would require that members be honest about the black lambs they have had born. This information could be provided confidentially. The software which we wrote at Grassroots Systems and which the Cotswolds Sheep Society uses, could help to identify the source and the

possible carriers. We already do similar analysis for other breeds. However, finding out the where from, and how widespread, is only half the story.

The anecdotal evidence suggests that ‘the cat is out of the bag’ and the frequency of the black gene within the white population is now high. I have bred Cotswold Sheep for over thirty years and I do not want to see a witch hunt for a single gene destroy our fabulous breed. I would therefore suggest that we use common sense. I think we should encourage members to be open about cases and record them on the database for future breed analysis but at the very least record it within their own flocks and use that information. I think we should encourage members to select against the trait, rather than try to impose Society rules in an attempt to overcome the problem.

### **Selection in your own flock**

If we want members to take their own action they must understand that if a ram throws a black lamb then he carries the black gene as does the ewe, and that half his white sons and daughters will also carry the black gene.

I would advocate that members begin with the rams. Given the apparent size of the problem we are not really in a position to cull all the black carrier females at this stage.

I suggest that members adopt a strategy so that once a ram throws a black lamb he is not be used again, and is not sold on to another breeder. This single act will help to prevent the frequency of the black gene from continuing to increase. It would also be best not to keep any sons of a ram which has thrown a black lamb unless they are progeny tested, because they have a 50% chance of carrying the black gene.

**Progeny testing** can be done by everyone, even on a small scale. It involves identifying any ewes in your flock who have produced black lambs in the past, in other words who are known to carry the black gene. Each time you mate them you are ‘testing’ the rams. If they throw any black lambs then that ram also carries the black gene and should not be kept. If they throw only white lambs then the ram used is increasingly likely to be ‘pure’ for white.

No ram lambs, should be kept out of these ‘carrier, test ewes’ because at least half will inherit the black gene from their mothers, which will only perpetuate the problem. The same is also true of their daughters but at this stage members may feel that it is too big a sacrifice to butcher them as well.

If members took progeny testing seriously and could begin to sell rams ‘believed to be pure for white’ or even in the future ‘ guaranteed pure for white’ we would begin to reduce the frequency of the hidden black gene in the population and hence the number of rogue black lambs being born.

Libby Henson

# FOCUS ON BLUETONGUE

## **What is it?**

Bluetongue is a midge borne viral disease that affects all ruminants, with sheep being the most seriously affected, other ruminants being less likely to show symptoms. The disease was first identified in the late eighteenth century in South Africa, in Merino sheep imported from Europe.

The virus shows as several strains, 24 having been detected to date. For a disease outbreak the virus, the midge able to carry the virus and an animal susceptible to the specific strain of the virus must be present.

## **How is it spread?**

Cattle are usually the primary host with the midge then spreading the disease from there to other species. Environmental factors also play a part in the spread. The midge breeds in moist conditions and prefers damp, muddy areas containing faecal and plant material. They feed at night in warm, still conditions preferring temperatures above 13°C. The midges can be blown long distances on the wind and it is thought that sporadic outbreaks in areas where this disease is not usually experienced have been wind borne from distant areas.

## **What are the Symptoms?**

Bluetongue only shows as a disease in sheep, mostly only European breeds will show symptoms. The animal may show signs of fever with swelling of the face, lips, nose, eyelids and sometimes ears. Congestion of the mouth, nose and eyes will also be displayed. Fluid may collect around the coronary bands. The sheep may become lame and depressed. The mouth will be sore and may show a frothy discharge and the tongue may become swollen and blue. The sheep could suffer from loss of appetite due to the the soreness and swelling of the mouth.

Death may occur within 2 weeks from oedema of the lungs or heart weakness. Death from secondary bacterial infections can occur within 3 to 5 weeks.

There is no treatment for the disease but recovery can be helped by the provision of shade, water, feed and shelter.

## **Prevention and Control**

The ideal control would be to immunize the primary hosts - cattle, however, that would not be economically viable; so prophylactic immunization of sheep to the strain of active virus would be the accepted method of control. Whether this can be done in this instance is yet to be seen.

The answer therefore seems to be to protect sheep as much as possible from midges, so keeping them away from damp muck heaps and giving shelter is beneficial. The use of insect repellents is also recommended.

There is suggestion that the midges could over winter in shelters so some insect control inside buildings may be a way forward.

*We have yet to find out what the implications of this disease will be for sheep owners in the United Kingdom but sadly, changing weather conditions indicate that it may be with us to stay.*

Sandra Rath

## SHOW DATES FOR 2008

SHOW DATE	SHOW	TEL NO	CLOSING DATE
Fri 13th June - Sun 15th June	The Three Counties Show	01684 584900	8th April
Sun 15th June	Rare Breeds & Minority Breeds Day	01684 584900	8th April
Thurs 3rd July - Sun 6th July	Royal Show	02476 858273	23rd April
Sat 5th July - Sun 6th July	Cotswold Show, Cirencester Park	01285 652007	16th June
Sat 19th July	Stroud Show	01453 883646	to be advised
Mon 21st July - Thurs 24th July	The Royal Welsh	01982 553683	7th May
Wed 30th July	Sheep 2008	01684 892661	31st March
Fri 1st Aug and Sat 2nd August	Show and Sale	01451 830461	20th June
Mon 25th August	Berkeley Show	01453 543335	5th August
Thurs 28th August	Monmouthshire Show	01291 691160	25th July
Sat 6th September	Moreton-in-Marsh Show	01608 651908	16th July
Sunday 14th September	Frampton Show	01452 740698	Stand only

## Our Pickwick Flock

We moved to Willowcroft Farm just before Christmas 1992, Catherine was 6 years old, and although she liked ponies she was not so keen to ride them as her sisters, so I promised her that we get some sheep and have some lambs in the spring.

The sheep we bought were actually cross bred Suffolk/Cotswolds and I decided that some of them looked nice with their long forelocks, but I felt that I needed to see real pure bred Cotswolds. I contacted the Society Secretary, Lyn Gibbings, who put us in touch with Norman and Kate Kay who we went to see with a view to buying some ewes to start our pure bred flock.

Norman and Kate were very helpful and sold us two lovely shearling ewes who were already in lamb to Middlewick Hercules. They produced four ewe lambs and our pure bred flock was started. We will always be grateful to Norman and Kate for selling us such good stock.

In our first year as Members we went to see all the Shows and found it very interesting to see the many different Cotswold flocks, and gradually began to form our ideas of which sheep suited us best. Catherine has a really good natural eye for sheep, and would always let me know what she felt would be the best for us to aim for.



We spent about four years showing our sheep, which was very enjoyable, but the best thing of all was to be among fellow members and seeing all our sheep together and having such good days together. In 1993 my personal circumstances changed and

I sold a lot of our stock, just keeping our core bloodlines. I am now in the process of re-building our flock and we have seventeen ewes in lamb, eight ewe lambs, two ram lambs, three shearling lambs and one senior ram. We look forward to seeing our friends and fellow members at the Shows next year, diseases permitting.

I was very grateful to Judy Wilkie for letting me have the details of the earlier breed registrations going back to C001 - Up and Coming and C002 - Up and Doing, bred by Tony Foster on the 8<sup>th</sup> March 1975 (to a Colburn Ram and a Garne Ewe). I have enjoyed many hours studying the sheep registrations and found it fascinating to see how our Members bred their stock.

I have also spent many hours reading veterinary books trying to learn more about sheep

ailments and the care and welfare of sheep, and have so far made many mistakes along the way, but have tried to learn from these. I have found the Society's workshops really helpful and worthwhile, and would recommend any new members to try to attend these, it's also



great to meet up with fellow members and exchange experiences.

One of the main attractions for me in the Cotswold breed has been the wool, and seeing the many different varieties that we seem to have within our flocks. There is so much to learn about wool and fortunately there are many people around to give us the benefit of their advice.

I personally think that whilst the prices that the wool board pays for our wool is quite low at present, as a sustainable natural product it has much to offer, and when spun it can make such nice warm clothes, it can even be blended with silk for superfine fabrics.

We will always be grateful to all the many friends and Members who have given us such good help and advice in the past twelve years.

Rob Harvey Long

## THE WINTER SOCIAL

This was the first time I had organised the winter social and given its reputation for being a good night I was a little nervous to say the least. Paul kept telling me not to worry everyone will help and it will run like clockwork. I know he meant well but it didn't work and as the forms started to arrive and more and more people said they were coming, my nerves got worse. I suppose I should say now that Paul was right (I will pay for that). With the replies came the offers of help and of course the list of food people volunteer to bring. The list just grew and grew both of people coming and the diverse amount of food, I was almost looking forward to it.

The big day finally arrived, the first job was to get the hall ready, this looked like the first mountain to climb, but true to their word the members arrived, some before me. You tend to forget how long some people have been supporting this event and how much knowledge they have. It will be a sad day when they have to hand over the reins to the newer members, but that is what the society is about, this is just one side of the Society's work, well maybe not work! Within a couple of hours the hall was decorated, I can't begin to tell you about the banter and laughs that went on. I can say it turned what could have been hard work into a joy and a lot of fun, something the society has been well known for in the past. The banquet had already started to materialise, as had the plan for the evening.

The members started to arrive laden with dishes, the 3 tables that had been put out to take this started to look very small, it just kept coming, and that did not include the puddings that were put in the kitchen for later. By the time everyone had arrived the tables were groaning under the weight and the carvers set to work on the Buffalo Beef, Turkey and Ham, the list of salad dishes would fill a recipe book, the word banquet does not do it justice. The table looked fantastic.

Eric Freeman said grace and dinner got under way, we had laid things out a little differently this year and it seemed to run smoother. Dinner could be described as uneventful, and that would be true, but that would not be a word anyone would readily associate with a meal of that magnitude and diversity. Bobs heart felt summary at the end of the evening on how much he had missed in previous years, as this was the first winter social he had attended, summed things up beautifully. Eventually dinner drew to a close and after a short break the puddings were served, these only continued the feast and can only be described as a puddings fans fantasy dream come true. There was plenty of everything, I am not sure if the description of the pavlovas as being healthy because they contributed to your daily fruit recommendation is strictly true, but members attacked them as if it was, and their undying support for the dairy industry can only be described as magnificent. I can't imagine how many cows it took to produce that much cream.

When dinner was over members sat back and listened to Eric Freeman and Robert Boodle recount their experiences when judging the flock competition. (I am not going

to repeat this nor the prize winners as I am sure this will be covered elsewhere).

Eventually when the prizes had all been give out and the speeches were over the evening drew to a close. Again everyone helped with the clearing up and it was done in no time. On reflection none of my fears had materialised (although I do say if I ever do it again there are things I would hopefully do better) and I had enjoyed organising my first winter social. I must thank everyone who helped with all the catering, hall preparation and clearing up. The list is too long to write but if you were not there this year we look forward to seeing you next, this is not an evening to be missed.

Yvonne Froehlich

## THIS YEAR'S TROPHIES

A number of trophies were awarded at the winter social this year.  
They were:

**Champion Flock at the Society Show** for the most points gained by an entrant. This year it was won by Yvonne and Paul Froehlich with 10 points.

**Best Home Bred Sheep at Society Show** the Perpetual trophy, a fine crook was awarded to Yvonne/ and Paul Froehlich

**Golden Fleece Challenge Trophy** for the most points during the showing year for the wool classes. This year the recipient was Davina Stanhope

**Frank Houlton Memorial Trophy** was awarded to Davina Stanhope

**2007 Flock Competition Trophy (large flock)** one of two new awards for the flock competition. The judges, Eric Freeman and Robert Boodle, presented this to Angela Reid

**2007 Flock Competition Trophy (Small flock)** The second of the two new trophies went to Kate and Norman Kay

**Frank Williams Trophy** for exceptional service to the Society was given to Stephen Parkes

*Our congratulations to all the winners*

Norman and Sandra

Having kept Cotswold sheep for some seven years I regret to say that Ian and I had always failed to make the Winter Social until last year when we had such a wonderful time, and were made so welcome, that we were really looking forward to this year's event. That was until I realised that the date clashed with my brother's sixtieth birthday celebrations and however much we wanted to come, we wouldn't be able to. However, fate intervened and a few weeks ago, my poor brother was rushed into hospital. I am very pleased to say that he was soon well on the way to recovery, but there was no way that he would be up to a weekend of intensive entertainment; we were free to attend the Winter Social.

We arrived punctually at Aldsworth to a village hall buzzing with activity. There were crackers, decorations, and buffet tables groaning under the weight of the most amazing array of dishes; it all looked wonderful. Shortly, armed with glasses of mulled wine, we were soon catching up with old friends, of whom we had seen little this year owing to the disastrous Foot and Mouth restrictions.

Then with our plates piled high with more delicious food than you would think you could possibly get onto a plate, we sat down to dinner and plenty of sheep talk – and that is one of the many things I really enjoy about the Winter Social; I can talk 'sheep' with less fear than usual of boring anyone to death.

After dinner it was time for speeches and presentations, the last of which were the results of the Flock Competition. I had thoroughly enjoyed showing Eric, Robert and Lynne, my flock way back in July. I, like many other entrants, had looked forward to receiving some on-farm advice and had hoped for reassurance that all was well with my sheep. It was clear during the visit that they thought I had some nice sheep, but I knew I was up against some wonderful and very well established flocks.

When Eric stood up I was hoping for some positive comments regarding my Queenford flock, but expecting nothing more. When he announced that the winner of the Small Flock competition was Kate Kay, I was thrilled for her, but not really surprised as I know they have some lovely sheep; incidentally their Middlewick Onyx has been one of my rams for several years.

Then it was time for the results of the Large Flock section. I have visited both Pat's Harford Flock and Davina's Tingewick Flock. In Pat's case it was to buy three beautiful ewes this autumn, and in Davina's case we went last year to buy Tingewick Chaucer, who might be a bit on the senior side now, but a more handsome ram, nor a more perfect gentleman, I have never met; I knew exactly what a high standard those two particular flocks set.

So when Eric announced that I had won the competition, it was one of the most extraordinary, and proudest, moments of my life. Actually, I still keep on picking up the cup to reassure myself it is not a dream. So I want to say a huge thank you, not only to Eric for awarding me this cup, but also to the many members of the Cotswold Sheep Society who have freely given me so much help and advice over the last seven years. There are certainly still challenges ahead, firstly I now have to maintain the overall standard of my flock, secondly I also have to try to breed some high quality individuals which will make an impression in the show-ring. However, sadly in reality my most pressing challenge next year, as one of the most easterly Cotswold flocks, may be to keep Blue Tongue at bay.

Angela Reid



*The food is prepared*

## **FOOT & MOUTH**

The announcement of the foot & mouth outbreak on Friday August 4<sup>th</sup> came as a particularly dramatic shock to those of us who had delivered our sheep to Cirencester market for our Annual Show and Sale.

I was sound asleep when someone called for us to take our sheep home and did not hear the phone. However they got Adrian who went to collect them at a very late hour and confronted me with the astonishing news in the morning.

I was particularly disappointed that the Auction was not to take place as we plan our Flock management around the August Sale and I had 12 ewes and 2 Rams needing a new home.

It was lucky that they had been on show for the Friday evening as there was a good opportunity for some prospective buyers to view them and I sold them all.

I had obtained an isolation licence during the previous foot & mouth outbreak and on checking it was still valid I was able to get the sheep off my farm during the “window” before the next scare.

All in all I came off lightly, but my sympathy is with all those people who found it quite devastating.

Pat Quinn

## SHEEP FOR SALE/WANTED

This is a free service to buyers and sellers.

The list is constantly being updated, so please do contact the Secretary with requests to buy or sell. Any adult rams advertised for sale must also have their genotype results available.

Also available to buy and sell sheep is the section on the website at  
*www.cotswoldsheep.org.uk*

### FOR SALE:

**Mr & Mrs John Flanders**, Glyn Yr Eryr, Talgarreg, Llandysul, Ceredigion,  
SA44 4HB. **Tel. 01545 590438**

### HAS FOR SALE:

- **Hendra Vean Jude**, C9972, DOB 25/02/2006  
Sire C6870 Middlewick Monsoon Dam C7677 Baggins Alder
- **Hendra Vean Ram**, C10083, DOB 06/03/2007  
Sire C8028 Janic Keane Dam C8724 Hendra Vean Hyfen
- **Hendra Vean Ewe**, C10085, DOB 25/02/2007  
Sire C8028 Janic Keane Dam C8726 Hendra Vean Hapus
- **Hendra Vean Ewe**, C10092, DOB 14/03/2007  
Sire C8028 Janic Keane Dam C7677 Baggins Alder

**Mr Roy Forward**, Dolebury House, Jews Lane, Churchill, Winscombe, N Somerset.  
**Tel. 01934 852344**

### HAS FOR SALE:

- **Middlewick Ruraigh**, C8205, DOB 17/02/2003  
Sire C7409 Middlewick Nocturne Dam C7304 Middlewick Nora

**Mr Paul Hazel**, Roel Hill, Hawling, Cheltenham, Glos. **Tel. 01451 850955**

### HAS FOR SALE:

- **Roel Hill Noah**, C8963, ARQ/ARQ, DOB 13/03/2005  
Sire C7721 Roel Hill Jack Dam C6922 Harford Ewe

"other older sheep available"

**Mrs Pam Nieto**, The Ridges, 37 Oxford Road, Hampton Poyle, Oxon, OX5 2QA  
**Tel. 01865 379748**

### HAS FOR SALE:

- **Ridges Amber**, C9787, ARR/ARR, DOB 09/03/2006  
Sire C6999 Gatcombe Ram Dam C6962 Ridges Crumpet

**Mrs Pat Quinn**, Lower Harford Farm, Naunton, GL54 3AG Tel: **01451 850346**  
HAS FOR SALE :

- **Harford Ram, C9613**, DOB 11/02/2006  
Sire: C6888 Oakhill Victory Dam: C7444 Harford Ewe
- **Harford Ram, C9208**, ARR/ARR, DOB 16/02/2005  
Sire: C8058 Burfords Larry Dam: C7140 Harford Ewe

**Mrs Vicky Robbins & Mr John Gush**, Rose Cottage, Southend, North Nibley, Wotton Under Edge, Glos. Tel. **01453 543988** or **Mobile 07711847392**  
HAVE FOR SALE

- 4 Females of mixed ages
- 4 Shearling Ewes by Middlewick Monsoon C6870
- **Tyndale George**, C10096, ARR/ARR, DOB 13/04/2006  
Sire C6870 Middlewick Monsoon Dam C8847 Tyndale Freya

**Miss Fiona McMahon & Mr Barry Pollock**, Station Stables, Lydford, Devon, EX20 4BW, Tel:**01822 820225**  
HAVE FOR SALE - later this spring

- 1 ewe born April 2006 COT387

## DID YOU KNOW?

### Twinter Clout

An old method of protecting ewe lambs from the ram at tupping time was to sew a piece of material into the wool to cover the rear of the lamb. It was known as a "twinter clout."

This meant that keepers of flocks on limited land or large widespread flocks were able to continue with a breeding programme without necessarily having to separate the flock.

At the end of the mating season, the cloths were removed, washed and kept for use the next mating season.

Sandra Rath

## DOUBLE TAGGING OF SHEEP - January 2008

*As you read this newsletter new rules will be in place concerning ear tagging of sheep. From the beginning of January most of the previous rules will no longer apply.*

Sheep born **before** 11<sup>th</sup> January 2008:

If they already have a UK or S tag will need no further identification.

If they are not tagged the new rules will apply, see below.

Sheep born **after** 11<sup>th</sup> January 2008:

If the animal **is** intended for **slaughter** it will need **one** UK tag - UK + flock or herd mark of birth + individual number (up to a maximum of 6 digits) in any colour other than red - six months after birth for intensively farmed sheep and nine months for extensively farmed sheep. If this sheep is then kept after twelve months it must be twin tagged with *either* a tag matching the number of the original tag *or* your next available number, ensuring tags are cross referenced in the holding record.

If the animal **is not** intended for slaughter it will need to be **double tagged**, assuming that most of us will be using ear tags (one ear tag and either an electronic tag or a tattoo is also allowed) six months after birth for intensively farmed sheep and nine months for extensively farmed sheep. The two tags must be identical UK tags and unique to that animal. We will therefore need to possess two identical sets of ear tags in future.

### **Replacement Identification:**

Lost or damaged tags must be replaced within 28 days of detection.

For **double tagged** animals the replacement must be *either* an identical tag *or* your next available UK tag, if the animal is not on its original holding the lost or damaged tag should be replaced with a **red** R tag - R + flock or herd mark of birth + individual number (up to a maximum of 6 digits) and the old UK and new R numbers cross referenced in the holding register.

For **single tagged** animals the lost or damaged tag must be replaced with *either* an identical tag *or* your next tag. As above if the animal is not on its original holding the tag should be replaced with a **red** R tag, the old UK and new R numbers must be cross referenced in the holding register.

***It will be an offence for animals to leave a holding without the correct identification.***

### **Export Identification:**

Sheep for export **must** be identified with two identical tags. If it has only one tag *either* an identical single tag can be applied, *or* two new identical UK tags can be applied, the original tag must, however, be left in the ear. The new number must be cross referenced with the old in the holding register. This must be done at the latest on the holding where the 30 day residency period is completed.

The importing authority must be consulted before applying two new tags as their rules may not allow this action.

Single tagged sheep with an R tag cannot be exported . Sheep double tagged with two R tags cannot be exported.

### **Movement Regulations**

All movements *on* to the holding must be entered into the holding register within 36 hours of movement taking place. Individual identification numbers need not be recorded.

For movements *off* the holding you can *either* keep a copy of the movement document *or* enter the movement into the holding register. If the copy of the movement record is to be kept these must be kept with the holding register and in order of date.

All movement of sheep must be accompanied by a movement document. This no longer has to register flock numbers or individual identification numbers. Lot numbers from auction are no longer required. There is now a new movement document that reflects these new changes. A copy of the movement document must be sent to the local Trading Standards department within 36 hours of movement.

### **Annual Inventory**

The date of annual inventory has now changed from 1<sup>st</sup> January to 1<sup>st</sup> December with the date for returns being the 31<sup>st</sup> December.

### **Imports**

Sheep coming from Northern Ireland must follow the rules above.

Sheep being imported must carry two identical UK ear tags at the holding of import and these must be cross referenced with the existing identification number in the holding register.

We will now be able to purchase single ear tags with identical numbers to those already used to replace or match tags. These will no doubt be more expensive, but may make it easier for keepers of small numbers of sheep to buy less than fifty tags at a time.

Sandra Rath

## **April 2008 ISSUE**

In our next issue we will be looking at the debates surrounding “line breeding,” as with black Cotswolds we are sure that this will lead to some conflicting opinions, however, differing views on subjects such as these are better aired than ignored. It may be that some members do not know of these controversial issues and find the subjects of some interest.

Our aim is merely to raise awareness and allow opinions to be ‘heard.’

We apologise for any articles that you may have sent in that do not appear here, we will be publishing these in the April edition.

Due to the limited space we may have had to edit or abbreviate your article. We hope you are not offended but if you wish the unedited article can be printed in a future edition.

Norman and Sandra

## FROM THE EDITORS

**We would like to send everyone our best wishes for the New Year and hope that 2008 is a good year for Flock Owners, their sheep and the Cotswold Sheep Society. We hope that the New Year brings with it an end to the epidemics of 2007 and to the restrictions that they impose on the farming industry.**

### Articles Wanted

Do you have an interesting article that you would like to contribute to future editions of the newsletter? If so contact either of us at the telephone numbers or Email addresses below.

We would love to hear about your flock with a few words and a picture, or your views on the future of the breed or anything else about your sheep that you would like to share with us.

### Thanks

We would like to thank everyone that has contributed towards this edition of the newsletter.

### Newsletter in Colour

This newsletter is available as a PDF file, so if you would like to receive a copy in full colour, rather than black and white, please contact Lucinda or Norman with your Email address.

**October's Newsletter** was printed using the wrong format by mistake, if you would like to be sent a copy by Email to produce in the usual format please contact Norman at his Email address below.

**Views in the Newsletter are not necessarily those of the editors or the Society.**

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*Norman and Sandra*